

Presentation

Mr. Chairman, Members of the Committee

My name is Bill Harris. I represent House District 30, which includes Garfield and Petroleum Counties and a large part of both Fergus and McCone counties.

First of all there is an amendment that removes all of section 8.

Since 1965 Montana has been struggling, spending lots of taxpayer money every year trying to get a handle on the brucellosis problem infecting the buffalo herd in Yellowstone Park. 46 years with limited success.

Even though there are no wild buffalo in Montana, our statutes list bison as wild and domestic several times. This confusing language only encourages some to fantasize a large buffalo herd roaming Eastern Montana.

Presently there are several domestic herds of bison in Montana. These animals are managed for health and largely marketed for consumption. These bison are being managed by livestock entrepreneurs and are in need of protection from disease, as do the cattle in Montana. Cattle and grain together represent the largest industry in Montana.

This bill simply clarifies that all bison in Montana are livestock. They are all subject to taxation as livestock and managed for health and ownership by the department of livestock.